

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 and 26-28 are now pending in the application. Claims 1-23 and 26-28 stand rejected. Claims 1, 14, and 26 are amended without adding any new matter. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-2, 7-23, and 26-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Rofrano (U.S. Pat. No. 6,035,283) in view of "Service Equals Sales." This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner relies on Rofrano to teach a relational "master" database of products having a product database server with an expert system that queries the shopper about the product, about themselves, and how they plan to use the product, and uses the relational database that relates answers to product features of selected products. But the Examiner admits that Rofrano does not teach a projects database or product finder server. Rather, the Examiner relies on Service Equals Sales to teach that sales persons at Home Depot™ obtain extensive training in knowledge of tools and their uses in particular projects. Then, the Examiner presumes that one skilled in the art would add a projects database in order to allow the expert system of Rofrano to pose questions about the types of projects for which the products should be suitable. But it is possible to make the combination suggested by the Examiner by specifying suitable projects for each product in the database, rather than by maintaining a separate projects database that contains a data structure of projects for which products are suitable with at least one of recommended product classes or attribute combinations.

Therefore, Rofrano and Service Equals Sales fail to teach, suggest, or motivate a separate projects database that contains a data structure of projects for which products are suitable with at least one of recommended product classes or attribute combinations.

Applicants' claimed invention is generally directed toward a networked product selection system. In particular, Applicants' claimed invention is directed toward a master database of products which contains information about the products, connected to a separate projects database that contains a data structure of projects for which products are suitable with at least one of recommended product classes or attribute combinations. For example, independent claims 1 and 14, especially as amended, recite, "a master database of products which contains information about the products ... a projects database containing a data structure of projects for which products are suitable with at least one of recommended product classes or attribute combinations." Therefore, Rofrano and Service Equals Sales do not teach, suggest, or motivate all of the limitations of the independent claims. These differences are significant because maintaining the relationships between projects and product classes or attributes allows this information to be maintained independently of the information about specific products, so that the information about specific products can be updated without need to specify projects for each new product.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of independent claims 1 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), along with rejection on these grounds of all claims dependent therefrom.

Claims 3-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as obvious over Rofrano (U.S. Pat. No. 6,035,283) in view of "Service Equals Sales," DoltYourself.com, and Microsoft Computer Dictionary. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As detailed above, Rofrano and Service Equals Sales fail to teach, suggest, or motivate a separate projects database that contains a data structure of projects for which products are suitable with at least one of recommended product classes or attribute combinations.

DoltYourself.com is a web site that provides a community forum with a user interface for people to specify their projects. However, DoltYourself.com does not teach, suggest, or motivate a separate projects database that contains a data structure of projects for which products are suitable with at least one of recommended product classes or attribute combinations.

The Examiner relies upon Microsoft Computer Dictionary to teach distributed computer systems. However, Microsoft Computer Dictionary fails to teach, suggest, or motivate a separate projects database that contains a data structure of projects for which products are suitable with at least one of recommended product classes or attribute combinations.


Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 3-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on their dependence from allowable base claim 1.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: March 12, 2007

By: 
Jennifer S. Brooks
Reg. No. 51,501
Christopher M. Brock
Reg. No. 27313

HARNES, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248) 641-1600

[CMB/GAS/JSB]